THE

ORPHANS;

OR,

GENEROUS LOVERS.

AN

OPERA.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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ORPHANS;

OR,

GENEROUS LOVERS.

AN OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS.

Publiſhed for the Benefit of the Widows and Orphans of the Soldiers who fell in Holland.

By HENRY SHEPHERD, Eſq.
Capt. in the 49th Reg.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

Advertiſement.

THE following Piece was offered to the Manager of Covent Garden, and on his declining to hazard the Repreſentation of it, the author attempted, by an application he judged moſt likely to ſucceed, to obtain the permiſſion of the Lord Chamberlain for the repreſentation of it at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, for ſuch ſucceſſive number of nights as his Lordſhip might be pleaſed to grant, the clear profits from thence ariſing to be ap-

propriated to the Fund for the Widows and Orphans of our brave countrymen who fell in Holland. But diſappointed in that mode of introducing it to the public, he is induced to offer it through the medium of the preſs; the profits from thence ariſing to be given to the above Fund.

The author is aware, that the adverſe iſſue of the Expedition alluded to may appear to caſt a ſhade of impropriety on a ſingle ſentiment or two, that may be found in the piece: but from a very good ſource of information, the free and unintereſted

tereſted account of a friend who has very lately paſſed ſome time in that country, he is competent to know, and from ſuch knowledge authoriſed to aſſert, that though the governing powers would of courſe uſe every exertion to maintain themſelves in the ſtations they poſſeſſed; the bulk of the people ſeverely felt, and grievouſly complained of the aſſumed ſuperiority of their Gallican Lords, who ruled them with no light or equal hand.

PREFACE.

WHEN I reflect with how great indulgence the Comic Opera has been received; I have wondered the Serious Opera has been ſo rarely attempted. We have I think had little more of that ſpecies of Dramatic Writing, than bad Tranſlations from Metaſtaſio. And even thoſe have always experienced a favourable reception. The ſucceſs of thoſe tranſlations has appeared to me, as offering an invitation to the Dramatic Writer to try the effect of an Original. This in the following piece I have attempted: and endeavoured to bring the celebrated Italian Dramatiſt down from courts, and camps, and palaces, to the humbler walks of private life. I have imped the buſkined ſtep, without the accompanyment of the bloody dagger, or poi-

poiſoned bowl; and, to checquer the ſcene, aſſumed the walk of the humbler ſock, without ſcaramouching it in buffoonery and farce.

With regard to the lyrics, or airs, the frequent occurence of them in the Italian Operas hath ever appeared to me a diſguſting interruption of the Drama. And indeed ſo much is ſubtracted from the gratification of the mind for the titillation of the ear, in the opinion of better judges of the ſubject than myſelf; as to have occaſioned the well known caricature of an Opera in crotchets, without words: implying that ſenſe and ſentiment were unneceſſary things.

As much as I know of the real Engliſh taſte, for in taſte there is often a good deal of affectation, I conceive the cantilena, or cantabile in muſic will pleaſe it moſt. And in accommodation to that idea

idea I have made my lyrics longer, than the Italian's airs uſually are, and not ſo frequently to occur: thereby avoiding the interruption of the Drama, and giving to them the nature of the plain cant, or ſong. And in ſupport of ſuch Idea I may adduce the ſentiment of Algarotti; who in his Eſſay on the Opera obſerves, that it is preſcribed by all the rules of taſte, that the buſineſs of Singers is to ſing; not to quaver, or trill away, the ſenſe, but to be intelligible.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN
MELVILLE.	EMILIA.
WILLIAMS.	HARRIET.
BELMOUR.	CICELY.
SNARLE.	
FIREBRACE.	
RAMBLE.	
SAYWELL.	
SNAP.	
DRILL.	
GREVILLE.	
THOMAS, *Servants.*	

THE

ORPHANS;

OR,

GENEROUS LOVERS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

BELMOUR. DRILL.

DR. Indeed, Sir, I know not how to take this annual bounty from you, for entertaining in my family one who is now become ſo near and dear to me, that I ſhould not know how to live without her.

BEL. We muſt have no words on that ſubject. Harriet was the legacy of my dying parent; who bequeathed to my protection the orphan of her reſpected friend. And ſo happy has that accompliſhed girl made me in my charge; that I will part with it to no one, who cannot urge a better claim to it than I have.

DR. And would you have me ſtill conceal from her her real parentage?

BEL. I would, till I can learn whether the preſent head of the family will take any more notice of a poor illegitimate child, than the laſt has done: of which, from the eccentric character I hear of him, I flatter myſelf with no great hopes.

DR. I muſt own I love to call her Harriet: but though I think ſhe be as dear to me, as if ſhe were indeed Harriet Drill; my heart is apt to reproach me with the liberty I take, knowing that ſhe has a natural right to a much better name.

BEL. The child of an honeſt man, old friend, inherits a prouder title, than fortune can confer.

DR. But where, Sir, is the uſe of continuing the deception?

BEL. 'Tis this: if her natural relations unnaturally reject her; ſhe will never know the loſs of claims, of which ſhe never knew ſhe was poſſeſſed. This point was ſettled between her mother, whom you know ſhe loſt at a very early age, and my own. And I feel the force and the propriety of it.

DR. Well, Sir, it muſt be as you pleaſe. And when, if I may be ſo bold, do you get into your own reſidence at Grove Houſe?

BEL. Soon, I hope. Though I have no reaſon to be diſſatisfied with my preſent ſituation at the Huntsman. Lord Ramble hath built a moſt commodious houſe there: where, the hunt not having commenced, I and a gentleman whom I found there, live with every accommodation, perfectly

fectly free and independent of each other; and yet happy in the reach of mutual ſociety.

DR. Folks ſay, he is a marvellous oddity; and that no body knows his name, but you.

BEL. Folks need have made no ſuch exception. For intimate as our common reſidence hath rendered us, I know no more particulars of him, than you do. I know, he has a heart; and as to his name, I never trouble myſelf about it. There are ſecrets, Drill, in all families: I never ſeek to dive into thoſe of others, and therefore hope from them the ſame indulgence.

DR. A good ſlap in the face, Drill, for thee. *(aſide.)*

BEL. And having mentioned lord Ramble's name, it reminds me of his brother. Pray have you ſeen Mr. Ramble lately?

DR. Yes, very lately: his honour is a very free gentleman.

BEL. I believe ſo. But I hope you keep Harriet out of the way of his freedoms. I have particular reaſons for this caution: which you will excuſe me at preſent from explaining. I am in a hurry. Good morning to you.

SCENE II

Drill.

Dr. Oh, your ſervant, ſweet, courteous, kind hearted landlord Ramble!—How fares it, friend Drill?—Is every thing tight about you?—Want any repairs?—I love the ſight of an old tenant—*(mimicking Ramble.)* Oh, yes: and I will take care, that you ſhall not have much of the ſight of my poor Harriet.

So with faſcinating eyes
The baſiliſk entraps his prize.
So the tearful crocodile
On the ſedgy banks of Nile
In treacherous ambuſh lurks.
So 'midſt creation's faireſt works
The lordly ſpoiler prowls for prey;
In the diſguiſe
Of tears, and ſighs,
And courteous ſmiles, his varied arts he plies;
And loves, and ſues, to triumph and betray.

Ah, Drill, Drill; thou vain old fool, to think his honour Ramble cared a ſtraw about thee!—And that

that ſmooth-tongued raſcal Saywell too:—curſe his favours! Oh, that I could be ſuch a fool, as to borrow his money, when I did not want it!—If Harriet —

SCENE III.

HARRIET. DRILL.

HAR. Did not you mention Harriet?

DR. I believe, I might. Mr. Belmour has juſt left me. He forced his annual bounty on me; ſaid you were his mother's ward, and muſt continue his; and bade me tell you, miſs Greville would call ſhortly on you, to go with her and chuſe a gown.

HAR. A bride-maid's gown I hope for my dear Emilia's wedding.

DR. Why, I believe ſo.

HAR. Heaven beſtrew the bridal-bed with roſes!—And may I aſk a favour?

DR. My dear girl, moſt freely.

HAR. It is your permiſſion to preſent Miſs Greville with the wedding ring you bought of Cicely, and for a ſimilar purpoſe, before my Greville was torn from me, gave to me.

DR. Moſt gladly. Thy Greville ——

HAR. Oh, were he mine!

DR. Greville will never let thee want a ring.

SCENE IV.

EMILIA. HARRIET. DRILL.

EM. Good morrow, Mr. Drill. I have called on Harriet to take an airing.

DR. I heard, Madam, of your kind intentions. Mr. Belmour has juſt left us. What a little paradiſe his taſte hath made at Grove Houſe!

HAR. And my father will tell you, I have a little appendage to a piece of furniture, that I know he holds more dear than all beſide the world can put into it: of which you muſt not refuſe me the acceptance. 'Tis this; *(gives Emily a ring)* which you have oft admired; and indeed it only wrings my heart with painful reflections, when I look on it.

EM. *(takes the ring, and looking at it offers to return it)* You muſt excuſe me. It is a ring of value.

DR. And you would ſadly mortify us, if you refuſed it on that account: knowing, as you do, how much we owe to Mr. Belmour's goodneſs.

EM. But, Harriet, I hope, will have occaſion for it herſelf.

DR.

DR. Your occaſions however, if report ſpeak true, are moſt preſſing.

EM. Report is generally too quick of tongue. My uncle, I aſſure you, hath not ſaid it. And yourſelves both know the force of his authority.

HAR. Too feelingly. But when from my poor bleeding heart his mandate forced the brother of Emilia; he tore him from a pure indeed, but lowly love: that boaſted no pretenſions to his affection, but what his partiality conferred. I do not blame his uncle: but I mourn my fate.

EM. Dwell not, my Harriet, on that mournful tale. It throws a gloom upon my mind, that ſadly weighs it down. I feel ſeverely for my brother: and truly ſympathize with thee. And who knows, how ſoon thou in turn mayeſt ſympathize with me?

HAR. Oh, no, no. Fate with more equal thread hath twined yours and your faithful Belmour's love and fortunes. *(Emily again offers to return the ring)* Indeed I muſt not be refuſed.

EM. Why then I take it, Harriet, as the gift of friendſhip, and will hope to wear it as the pledge of love.

Hail pledge of love ſo luſt'rous bright,
Whoſe emblematic zone
In happy union can unite
Two kindred hearts in one!

Hail, gift, whoſe ſecret powers impart
A richer glow, a brighter ray,
Than all thy radiance can diſplay,
The tribute of a grateful heart!

Scene changes to the Huntſman Inn.

SCENE V.

WILLIAMS. THOMAS.

WILL. You may pack up. I ſhall be off to-morrow.

TH. What from this charming place, Sir?—

WILL. Yes; from this charming place, Sir.

TH. Where every body is ſo fond of you; where you live juſt according to your own liking; know every body, and no body knows you.

WILL. Fool, I have no likings. Go, and pack up, and when I want your advice, I'll aſk for it.

TH. Nay, Sir, I do not complain: 'tis my bones, that cry out. With living on the turnpike road, trot, trot, after your chaiſe, from end to end, and ſide to ſide of the kingdom, from head to toe they are rattling and ſhuffling, and all out of their places.

WILL.

WILL. If you be tired of my ſervice, quit it.

TH. And turn poſture-maſter: a place, for which I am rarely well qualified; for I have not a joint about me, that will not bend every way.

WILL. How is it out of doors?—I ſuppoſe juſt ſuch a day, as yeſterday.

TH. Yes, Sir; as like for all the world, as one day is like another.

WILL. I thought ſo. What a flat, ſame, inſipid world, we live in! Alexander himſelf, when he had conquered it, and ſighed for another, was not more heartily ſick of it, than I am. I will go to bed again.

TH. But that would only be doing what you did laſt night. Had not your honor better ride out this morning?

WILL. And would not that be doing juſt what I did yeſterday?

TH. Only the two ſame things would not be quite ſo near each other. So, Sir, ſhall I ſaddle the horſes?

WILL. Do, as I ordered you, raſcal, and pack up.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

WILLIAMS.

Some rhodomantade about life's chequer'd ſcenes,
With pleaſing variety nicely entwined;
But what that chequer'd variety means,
I have ſought late and early, yet never could find.

Life is a flat, without hillock or dell,
'Tis an ocean quite ſtagnate and ſtill;
'Tis the circular trail of a Ranalagh belle,
'Tis the round of a horſe in a mill.

SCENE VII.

WILLIAMS. BELMOUR.

BEL. Neighbour, how goes it?

WILL. Not at all. I ſtagnate. The world is a piece of *drie ground: flat and tedious. I wiſh I was over it.

BEL. But on that drie ground grows many a fair flower: if you would but ſeriouſly ſet about collecting them.

WILL. Chief of which I ſuppoſe you reckon the blooming tulip of a painted face. No of-

* A Scotch and provincial word ſignifying a piece of flat ground apparently ſhort, but long and tedious in paſſing over. I do not know an equally expreſſive ſynonyme.

fence,

fence, George, to your Emilia. I believe her to be juſt what nature made her: woman all over. Shew me a woman: and I will ſhew you the ſex. The ſame, the ſame, always the ſame.

BEL. No, no: thoſe, who pretend moſt to have ſtudied them, lovers and poets, hold otherwiſe. They tell us there is not a more changeful thing in nature.

WILL. True: but they are all, and always, ſo. They are ſo conſtant to inconſtancy; there is a ſameneſs even in that.—hey, hoe!—I am tired of buttoning and unbuttoning.

BEL. Why if on the ſpot, where you and I have whimſically fixed our preſent reſidence, no variety is to be found; I ſhould with you almoſt deſpair of finding it.

An inn is the world, with variety ſtored,
Adapted to every gueſt;
It has eggs for the miſer, a plentiful board
For the gay, and a flaſk of the beſt.

It has maids of the chamber ſo pretty and ſmiling,
You meet friends at the table ſo courteous and civil,
Some honeſt and truſty, ſome falſe and beguiling;
To diſtinguiſh aright the ſaint, and the devil,
So like are their features, though diſtant their kin,
"Take care,"
"Beware,"
Is the language alike of the world, and an inn.

SCENE

SCENE VIII.

MELVILLE. WILLIAMS.

MEL. Paſſing by, I called, to aſk if you were diſpoſed to a morning's ride.

WILL. I ſhould like it. But hang it! 'tis a dull day: and how is the wind?

MEL. North eaſt, I believe.

WILL. So it always is: blowing rheumatiſms and catarrhs at every blaſt.

MEL. And yet by your looks you ſeem not to be much troubled with either.

WILL. To be ſure the ſluggiſh tide continues to flow: but very languidly, Mr. Melville. I have tried hard for ſomething that might give a ſtimulus to it. But no: the ſame wind every where, the ſame face of things, the ſame nonſenſe, the ſame trifling, the ſame inclination to my elbow chair.

MEL. And yet you wear air and exerciſe on your countenance.

WILL. But 'tis the ſame air, the ſame exerciſe. I uſe the open air, becauſe I am tired of a cloſe one. I take exerciſe becauſe I am tired of ſitting ſtill. At this very inſtant, you do not know, Mr. Melville, you cannot conceive what I

 feel:

feel: A relaxation—an oppreſſion—a flatneſs—a langour—a kind of I know not what.

MEL. The very worſt of all maladies. Indeed I pity you.

WILL. Oh, the very devil. If it were but the gout, ſometimes in my head, and ſometimes in my feet; there would be ſome variety in it. But always, always the ſame: 'tis diſmal. You will excuſe me attending you to day, Mr. Melville. I muſt keep to old elbow. *(throws himſelf into an elbow chair.)*

MEL. And as I fancy, I only diſturb your contemplations; I will bid you good morning. And as ſoon as you are tired of them, and are inclined to find out ſomething elſe to tire you; I ſhall be happy to ſee you at Melville Lodge.

SCENE IX.

MELVILLE. WILLIAMS. SNARLE.

SN. I do not fright you away, I hope, Mr. Melville.

MEL. Indeed you do not. Our friend will tell you, I was going.

WIL. But as Mr. Snarle is come; it may be prudent to ſtay a little longer, to watch your reputation.

SN. Mr. Melville knows he has nothing to fear. I probe no wounds. Candour is the word with me.

MEL. Right Mr. Snarle: and I will truſt that candour; eſpecially as I leave ſo good an advocate behind me.

SCENE X

WILLIAMS. SNARLE.

WILL. Come then, my dear Gazette, ſit down, and let me read thee.

SN. And as your hiſtory is a little wrapped up in hieroglyphics, I ſhould like to read a page or two of that; for I am eternally aſked about the ſtrange gentleman without a name; and can give nothing in the ſhape of an anſwer.

WILL. Why Snarle, thou doſt ſo hate the world, and art therefore ſo congenial to me, that I am half inclined to humour thee.

SN. I hate the world! Not I. I like the world: the world is a good world enough, but I think it might be better tenanted: and there is my quarrel with it.

WILL. Like the world! Then thou never loved, as I have done; thou never wert a ſoldier, and at the call of honour left and loſt thy love; nor laid on honour's bed, 'midſt clay cold corſes, whoſe

whoſe former tenants had juſt winged their glorious way to better worlds, by a too officious ſurgeon been reſtored to life and miſery; long detained a priſoner by the protraction of a tedious war, thou never haſt been robbed of a jewel, whoſe luſtre could not long be hid, but caught ſome happier eye, and left thee, how, or for whom, thou ne'er could'ſt learn. While in that loſs, the world, deprived of all that could to thee beam luſtre in it, became a dull, dreary, diſmal flat. And might I chuſe my ſtation in it; ——

SN. Inſtead of a half-pay officer, you would be a field marſhal, I ſuppoſe.

WILL. I would be maſter of that little white, ſnug, ſtraw-thatched houſe, with hay-ricks round it; which you remember I have oft admired.

SN. And once ſtopped your Horſe, and with a ſigh exclaimed, Oh, that I was as happy as the tenant of that ſtraw-thatched ſhed!

WILL. Aye, and I could now repeat the exclamation. And, as I know not how ſoon buſineſs may call me hence; there will I take my ride to day, 'tis in my way to Melville's, and feaſt my eyes with a farewell look at it.

'Tis not to thoſe,
Who court repoſe
On beds of down, in rooms of ſtate,
That ſleep unlocks her ivory gate.
In the turf-built ſhed,
On the ſtraw-made bed,
Her wreath impales th' unpillowed head.

SN. She viſits the ſtraw, ſhe viſits the down,
Impartial alike to the courtier, and clown,
Cries Content, as ſhe ſmote her ſoft breaſt;
But by either alike unconfined,
It is here, that you only will find
The moments of eaſe, and the bleſſing of reſt.

Scene changes to Mr. Melville's

SCENE XI.

MELVILLE. EMILIA.

MEL. Emilia, you have of late appeared to me leſs chearful, than you uſed to be.

EM. I might appear ſo, Sir; becauſe I have thought that you of late ſeemed more than uſually thoughtful. And if I were not intereſted in all you felt, I ſhould ill deſerve your goodneſs.

MEL. And are you happy in your ſituation?

EM.

EM. The queſtion hurts me, Sir. For if I be not; I am either the moſt ungrateful of women, or the moſt unreaſonably diſſatisfied.

MEL. Then why wiſh to change it?

EM. You, Sir, have always been, not in the diſtant relation of an uncle, but a parent to me.

MEL. Emilia, I am neither.—

EM. Not my parent,—not my uncle,—what, no relation!—

MEL. And yet perhaps, I love you, Emily, dearly as if I were.

EM. What claim have I either to your goodneſs, or your love?—Alas! who am I?

MEL. My loved Emilia, my tender friend: and in ſuch character regarding me, am I indifferent to you?

EM. You, you indifferent to me! the guardian of my infant years, the protector of my youth: to whom I look up with filial reverence, with filial love.

MEL. Mr. Belmour, Emily, hath declared his paſſion for you: Mr. Ramble hath done the ſame. I have objections to both.

EM. To Belmour?

MEL. Why would you wreſt further explanations from me?—I cannot bear to part with you.

EM. We ſcarcely part. Belmour's reſidence is ſo very near. *(ſervant enters and gives a letter*

to Melville, which he reads.) Some buſy tongue, I find, has been traducing Belmour's ſpotleſs name. *(aſide.)*

MEL. This line requires an anſwer. It comes from Mr. Ramble. *(he ſits down to write.) (Emilia going.)* I ſhall not be a minute.

EM. I will return, Sir, in a minute.

SCENE XII.

MELVILLE.

MEL. *(after anſwering the letter which he gives to a ſervant.)* Come, Melville, let me probe thy heart. Thou ſayeſt it is not love's impaſſioned appetite, that ties thee to Emilia. What is it then? The tenderneſs of friendſhip. Doth friendſhip make thy houſe a deſert, when Emilia is not there? Would not the heart of friendſhip beat high, to make her great in Ramble's addreſſes, or happy in Belmour's love?—Oh, ſhame, ſhame, Melville! reflect on fifty; and then look on Emily's bloom at ſcarcely twenty.—'Tis dotage.—Yes, Emilia, thou art free.—And Melville, if he can be himſelf, ſhall be content to ſee thee happy. But here ſhe comes: and at a glance I feel my reſolution melt.

SCENE

SCENE XIII.

MELVILLE. EMILIA.

MEL. Belmour's reſidence, I think you obſerved, was near. But I would have you nearer to me.

EM. Not knowing what I am, I know not how to anſwer you.

MEL. Hear me then. One fatal indiſcretion marked my youth: and planted in my breaſt a ſcorpion; which ever ſince I have fed with ſighs and tears. You oft have heard me ſpeak of Summerwell, and my Emilia; whoſe dear remembrance I cheriſhed in your name.

EM. I have: and oft have given the tribute tear to your ſad tale of hapleſs love.

MEL. Oh, ſhe was dear to me, as are the ruddy drops of life. She did all charms poſſeſs, but thoſe the world hold high, fortune and birth. To ſatisfy a parent's ſolicitude to break ſuch a connection, I conſented to go abroad; but privately took my Emilia with me. My father's illneſs ſuddenly called me home. Emilia's ſituation would not ſuffer her to accompany me. I left her at Boulogne. That place, I learned, ſhe left

abruptly. But why, or whither ſhe removed, I never to this hour could learn.

EM. Alas, Emilia, what didſt thou by falſhood forfeit, or misfortune loſe, in the affection of the worthy Melville!

MEL. Of this ſad tale enquire no further.

EM. If ſuch be your commands. And yet—

MEL. Then hear me on. Deep melancholy from that time clouded my days. Early one morning, as my cuſtom was, I ſhaped my penſive ſtep to the alcove; that with Emilia's preſence once was wont to ſhine ſo golden gay. Bedded on flowers, there lay a pair of lovely babes. They ſmiled on me; and, as I reached my hand, with rival graſp they ſeemed to ſeiſe my finger.

EM. Sure gracious providence did ſo direct them to claim your pity to a friendleſs pair.

MEL. So thought I, Emily; and freely gave it: and their growing years ſoon won my love. Though buſy was the hand of time to bury my misfortunes; the ſcenes of Summerwell would not let them die. Every object round brought my loved Emily to my galled remembrance. I therefore left the place: and, more freely to indulge my ſolitude, took in this diſtant ſpot this houſe, called Melville Lodge; and from the houſe aſſumed the borrowed name I bear. And to obtain you, *(Emily ſtarts)* in the neighbourhood

hood reſpect: yourſelf and brother I adopted by the title of ſiſter's children. But, Emily, I never had a ſiſter. And now, Emilia, tell me, who has thy love: Belmour, or Melville?

Em. Alas! alas! your goodneſs has undone me. Oh, had ſome hand, leſs exerciſed in noble acts than your's, with painful drudgery marked my youthful years!

Mel. Wrong me not, Emilia. I did not lift you up; to make your fall the greater. Nor aſk I more, than it is in your power to give.

Em. So very poor am I, that I have nought to give. My love, my gratitude to you, riſes, forgive it, Heaven! almoſt to adoration. Yet I will not bluſh to own, I have in all the purity of ſpotleſs innocence long loved Belmour; but never knew till now how much I loved him.

Mel. Emily, you never had a rival in my heart: the reflection pains me, that I ſhould have one in your's. But you are free. Conſult your reaſon.

Em. When o'er the gently flowing tides,
While ſoft the gale,
That ſwells the ſail,
The weak frail bark of woman rides;
The mind undiſturb'd, and paſſion aſleep,
Reaſon will pilot us over the deep.

But when, clouded the ſkies,
Dread tempeſts ariſe,
And that tempeſt of love, we dread moſt;
The pilot is blinded,
The helm is not minded,
And this way, and that way, the veſſel is toſs'd:
It rocks, and it reels,
It bulges, it heels.
It founders at laſt, and is loſt.

Heaven knows how cloſely knitted to my heart your goodneſs, your image is. — I cannot, will not leave you. Oh teach me only to make Belmour eaſy.

MEL. Young men are apt to look more ways, than one. So tell Belmour, Emily, in taking you he marries one, whoſe only dowry is the ſuperior charms, that laviſh nature gave her.

SCENE XIV.

EMILIA.

EM. Could I commit an outrage againſt the generous Belmour, and conceive ſo meanly of him, as to think that would give him eaſe; I would tear him from my heart, even though the ſtruggle broke it.

The

The tigreſs, that with hunger ſtung
Leaves at home her callow brood,
To range the plain, or ſcour the wood,
If under covert of the night
She on ſome vagrant victim light,
Springs on the trembling ſtray;
And purpled o'er
With ſylvan gore
Homeward ſhe meaſures back her way,
Homeward ſhe bears the mangled prey,
Regardful of her young.
Ah! whence then let reflection ſay,
From whence is poor Emilia ſprung?

SCENE XV.

BELMOUR. EMILIA.

BEL. Lovely mourner, ſay,
In that chryſtal ſluice
What fiend could ere produce
The herald drop of grief;
And love ſhall wipe the pearly drop away:
Or ſympathy try,
By the breath of a ſigh,
The pleaſure to ſhare
Of dividing the care,
And wafting a gale of relief.

Em. O Belmour, Belmour! *(throws herſelf into his arms.)*

Bel. What means my love? Speak, dear Emilia: and let me heal thy griefs, or ſhare them.

Em. No: they are all I have: and I will be ſo great a churl with them, they ſhall be all my own.

Bel. Unkind Emilia! Do I merit this? Of ſuch cobweb texture were our plighted vows?

Em. They are diſſolved, not broken.

Bel. Diſtraction! whither doth this riddle tend? — Where is your uncle?

Em. I have no uncle.

Bel. I am ſorry, there is ſo much reaſon for thy tears. When loſt the world that worthy, generous man?

Em. Long, long may he live to bleſs the world! He is only loſt to me.

Bel. Bliſters ſeize the tongue, that has maligned to him my Emily's name!

Em. Take heed: — no longer thy Emilia. Leave me, leave me, Belmour; and be happy.

Bel. Impoſſible. So cloſely twined together in my mind are the ideas of happineſs and my Emilia.

Em. There is a tale, will ſeparate them. I am fallen, Belmour, fallen far beneath the niece of worthy Melville.

Bel. When thou forgetteſt thy vows, and hurleſt

hurleſt thy Belmour from thee ; thou indeed art fallen.

Em. Hear me, Belmour. My heart is thine: and never, never will I knit it with another. Yet I muſt ne'er be thine. Take one more worthy of thee.

Bel. I cannot.

Em, I know you can.

Bel. How ?—Where ?—Why ?—Are not thy charms the ſame ?—Is there a hidden ſpeck upon thy mind, that was not yeſterday ?

Em. One anſwer ſerves for all. Mr. Melville bade me tell thee, and with more ſternneſs than I e'er experienced from him, in taking me you took a portionleſs, poor, girl.

Bel. Is there the rub ? Then all is well. For portionleſs and poor, I will not bate a jot of all my hopes. Portionleſs, and poor, Emilia ! No: fortune, that cannot make thee richer than thou art, can never make thee poor.

Wealth, I own, is worth poſſeſſing,
Prolific ſource of many a bleſſing:
To charm the taſte, the eye to pleaſe,
Ambition's wand, the chair of eaſe,
Are hers: which take who will for me;
For I have all in Emily.

Em.

EM. Generous Belmour! But it muſt not be.

BEL. No doubts, Emilia. By the laſt mail I have received notice of the remittance of my fortunes from the eaſt, the earnings of my gallant father, in drafts for twenty thouſand pounds, on the French Eaſt India Company: accompanied with further news of joy, importing that my friend, your brother, was alive. The fortune is not great: not great enough, to make us happy, but to keep us ſo.

EM. Alas, poor George alive! then he has yet a bitter cup to drink.

BEL. What means Emilia?

EM. A tale; that, low as thou haſt heard me fallen, muſt ſink me lower.

BEL. No tale can ſink thee low.

EM. That I, and my poor brother, are two deſerted needy foundlings: even from our birth expoſed to the mercy of the rude elements, and ruder world.

BEL. 'Tis falſe.

EM. Suſtained by the benevolence of a ſtranger: and that in our humble veins doth courſe no drop of blood allied to that of Melville.

BEL. Who told thee this?

EM. My uncle—ah me! I have no uncle.

BEL. Spring thee from whence thou mayeſt, thy blood runs purer, nobler far, than his; who taunts

taunts the poor deſerving object of his favour with mean repetitions of it.

Em. Oh, ſpare thy harſh ſurmiſes. I have drank deeply of his bounty.

Bel. And I will thank him for it; thank him for all his favours: moſt for the bleſt occaſion he hath given me of telling my Emilia, how much I love her; of telling him, of telling all the world, 'twas Emily, the charming Emily I loved; and not the niece of Melville. Cheer up, Sweet Excellence; and for an uncle loſt, uncle, and huſband ſhalt thou find in me. We will to church tomorrow, tomorrow morning, Emily. Not a day longer ſhalt thou bear on his benevolence.

Em. Be not too warm. Think, Belmour. Take one more worthy of thee.

Bel. Unkind Emilia!

Em. Nay, but think.—when envy ſtirs the flaunting dames around, for all will envy me my Belmour's love, how will they toſs their heads, and look aſcant, with ſupercilious ſneer, at Belmour's low-born wife! ah, how will then thy generous ſpirit bear the galling gibe?

Bel. As one, who feels thy charms, and knows their value. *(ſervant enters)*

Ser. Mr. Ramble, Madam, is below, and begs the honor of waiting on you.

Em. I will attend him. *(exit ſervant.)*

Bel. Is Ramble then my rival? A powerful one,

one, I own. Yet will I not fear to leave my Emily with him. What would my rival more? Adieu, my dear Emilia! Expect me in the evening.

EM. And in the mean time ——

In my abſence ſtill poſſeſs me.
BEL. As in preſence I careſs thee.
EM. For my ſmiles, and my tears,
My pains, and my pleaſure ——
BEL. For my hopes, and my fears,
My loſs, and my treaſure ——
Both { When abſent I feel, and when preſent I ſee,
All are derived from, and centred in, thee.

SCENE XVI.

RAMBLE.

RAM. Now plague on my folly, that has drawn me into ſo ridiculous a ſituation! I know no more how to act, than my groom. I ſuppoſe I am to be very diſtant, mighty polite, and prodigiouſly ceremonious: and all this, while alone with one of the fineſt girls I know. I will try.— But I ſhall never hold out. Here ſhe comes.—

What

What a pair of eyes!—Impoſſible to keep my lips to myſelf; and my tongue within proper bounds.

SCENE XVII.

EMILIA. RAMBLE.

RAM. Madam, I have the honour to kiſs your hands. I hope, I do not intrude on any engagement.

EM. The viſits of Mr. Melville's friends can never be intruſive here. I am ſorry he is not himſelf at home.

RAM. I ſhould indeed regret his abſence, in any other proxy than yourſelf.

EM. You do me honour.

RAM. Such as your charms exact. And, pity! They ſhould, like the ſnow-drop, be deſtined to bloſſom only in this obſcure retreat.

EM. The obſcurity of the ſpot ſo exactly ſuits the temper of my mind; that I would not change it for the meridian of a court.

RAM. When you ſhall become acquainted with that meridian; your opinion of this, I truſt, will change.

EM. Mr. Melville is, I think, too fond of retirement

tirement himſelf, ever to occaſion me the dangerous experiment.

RAM. That, Madam, will be a huſband's province. Huſband! What a mouthfull! I thought it would have choaked me. *(aſide.)*

EM. You are diſpoſed to be merry.

RAM. Never more ſerious in my life. And to be plain, my buſineſs, in the honour I now do my ſelf, is of a very ſerious nature. I have already advanced ſo far in it, as to have told you, what your glaſs tells you every day, that you are a very charming creature. And I have now to add, that I am moſt bewitchedly in love with you.

EM. From you, Sir, who are ever mingling with the blaze of beauties that ſhine in the greater world, you will excuſe me liſtening to ſuch gallantry. *(going.)*

RAM. Oh, upon my life, you muſt not ſtir. *(taking hold of her hand.)* I have not yet told half my tale.

EM. Muſt not!—What do you mean, Sir? *(pulls her hand from him.)*

RAM. To ſay further, that I am determined to marry you; to whirl you up to London, to ſhew you balls, routs, and maſquerades, to refine your ideas, and form your taſte to ſo exquiſite a degree; as to enable you, when we return to purling ſtreams, and whiſpering breezes, to ſurprize

and

and entertain your country neighbours with fetes champetres, and rural maſquerades.

Em. Condeſcending Sir! My head turns giddy at the flattering ideas you have ſuggeſted. But as you have already taken the liberty on your part to determine; will you not give me leave to determine on mine?

Ram. By no means, you dear little rogue. Mr. Melville has done all that for you. The whole buſineſs is ſettled; and I am commiſſioned by him, by way of form, to demand your hand and heart. *(takes hold of her hand, which ſhe pulls from him.)* Then we will live, and love.—I will teach you, how.

Em. My heart is gone.

Ram, Then I will try to find it. *(lays hold on her.)*

Em. Not quite ſo familiar, if you pleaſe, Sir. For know that he, who does poſſeſs my heart, will guard it.

Ram. The martial Belmour, I ſuppoſe. Aye, the army, a wife, or any thing, to bolſter up his waning fortunes.

Em. I find the quarter, from whence Mr Melville's account of Belmour comes. *(aſide.)* Be Belmour what he may, he has my heart. And would you merit my eſteem,——

Ram. I will take your hand without it.

Em. So would not Belmour do.

Ram.

RAM He could not. 'Tis transferred already by Mr. Melville, and accepted by your humble Servant.

So pray you have done, my good lady;
No more of your bouncing, and whining:
The time is too preſſing
To love and careſſing,
To the joys of poſſeſſing,
To be waſted in wooing,
In billing and cooing;
I offer no courtſhip, 'tis marriage I bring.
The lawyers are waiting, the parchment is ready;
And nothing is wanting, but ſealing and ſigning,
The chaunt of the prieſt, and the charm of the ring.

End of the Firſt Act.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

Ramble Hall.

RAMBLE. SAYWELL.

RAM. Where is the uſe of a fortune, if it do not put a man above the reſtraints, that tie the vulgar down?

SAY. If when you have a mind to indulge an eccentric whim, an old gray-beard is to call you to order; where is the difference between you who have a fortune, and me that have none?

RAM. I did but ſay a civil thing the other day to Farmer Butters's wife: and the old Put cried out, "hands off, Sir."

SAY. Had I been there, I would have cried, "hark forward, Sir:" have blocked up his windows, and given you an opportunity of taking his wife through the door.

RAM. But the firſt object, you know, is my affair with Harriet. How ſtands that buſineſs?

SAY. In a very hopeful way: as thus. Snap arreſts Drill on the four hundred pounds bond, which by your direction I lent him.

RAM. But how is that to forward my affair with Harriet? The farmer goes to gaol; and Harriet to ſome of her friends.

SAY. Friends on thoſe occaſions are not ſo very forward. Indeed, my good Sir, we muſt keep to our ſeparate departments. You are very well at the executive part of an intrigue: but you are no deſigner. Mark me. The farmer, with a priſon before his eyes, makes propoſals for ſettling the affair, and keeping out of the pound. I have no objection to it. You want a young perſon to ſuperintend your family. Harriet is the very thing. The bond is cancelled, and Harriet is yours.

RAM. The engraftment on the bond is good. But will not the fruit take too long in ripening?

SAY. None at all. The bond is due. Snap is at his poſt. And I have at this moment a ſerpent, in a very matron-like ſhape, doing the office of temptation in Harriet's ear.

RAM. Thou dexterous miniſter of a man of pleaſure's ſtate, how ſhall I reward thee?

SAY. And when you come down to look at your eſtates; Mrs. Butters is a nice piece of fleſh and blood, and will ſerve very well for country buſineſs.

RAM. Excellent caterer. But ſtill you know, another labour waits my Hercules.

SAY. I underſtand you: Emilia. I have ſtudied her points: and that affair too is in train. But ſhe

is a

is a high mettled dame, and ſhould my plan fail, muſt be carried by a coup de main.

RAM. Illuſtrious general!

SAY. It is the part of a great commander, in caſe of a check to be prepared with reſources. And for that purpoſe I have engaged a couple of handy fellows from Tipperary. And a poſt-chaiſe and four, eaſt, weſt, north, or ſouth will in two hours put her in your poſſeſſion.

RAM. Thou prince of Paphian ſatellites, how does thy genius ſoar! However from this labour I thought to have relieved thee: and to have taken Melville's niece for better or worſe, by way of barter.

SAY, You do not mean to marry?

RAM. Do not be afraid for your profeſſion. Emilia might have ſerved for a month or two, to foil upon in the autumn; while you were beating about the country for my winter's regale. But thou haſt ſhewn thy genius in a good diſcernment: for even matrimony could not purchaſe her. But, de tout mon cœur. Pleaſure is my object: and if that queen of pleaſure, Love, be impregnable in one fortreſs, I will attack her in another.

Money is the lawyer's aim,
The ſoldier's is renown,
The poet's is to woo the nine
Celeſtials of Parnaſſus.
As to myſelf,
I care not for pelf:
As freely I own,
I ſeek not a name,
In the annals of fame:
To the choir of Apollo my claim I reſign,
Nor court a coy muſe for a whimſical dream;
The garden of pleaſure is my Academe,
And my muſes are fleſh and blood laſſes.

(ſervant enters.)

SER. Farmer Butters, Sir, would be glad to ſpeak to you.

RAM. Shew him in. *(exit ſervant.)* Now, Saywell, mind: civility is the word.

SCENE II.

RAMBLE. SAYWELL. BUTTERS.

RAM. Well, Maſter Butters, whatever errand brough you here, I am glad to ſee you.

BUT. Indeed, your honour, I wiſh it were a better: for I am ſorry to inform you, that your pointer dog has miſtaken my lambs for a covey of

of partridges, and made woeful havock amongſt them.

SAY. Are you ſure, Farmer, it was his honour's dog?

BUT. Yes, Mr. Saywell, I am: I know all his honour's puppies. I have got the ruffian in the ſtable, taken in the very act. There is another puppy or two of his: I ſhould not care, if I had them as ſafe.

RAM. No matter, Farmer: do not be violent. I will call on you, and ſee what miſchief is done: and you ſhall have ſatisfaction. *(rings the bell.)* You will take ſome refreſhment before you go.

BUT. Thank your honour.

RAM. *(to a ſervant who enters.)* Take care of Maſter Butters.

SCENE III.

RAMBLE. SAYWELL.

SAY. Now for a Machiavilian ſtroke. Let Ned make the farmer drunk, and put him to bed. And I will take care to watch him; while you go, and ſettle the damages with Mrs. Butters.

RAM. Thy fertile imagination, Saywell, out ſtrips my darings. I am not Machiavilian enough for a cool deliberate act of raſcality. When on

the ſpur of paſſion, thou knoweſt I want no other ſpur. And this I will ſay for thee, I never knew thee uſe the check rein with me.

SCENE IV.

SAYWELL.

SAY. Paſſion is a mettled ſteed;
We miniſters of joy,
Who ride,
Who guide,
To give it ſpeed,
The ſpur, and not the rein, employ.
And if, thus urged in pleaſure's chace,
Th' impaſſion'd youth grow lean and poor;
We riders ſhew a ſleeker face,
We touch the glittering ore,
'Tis we, that win the race.

SCENE V.

Changes to Farmer Drill's

HARRIET. CICELY.

HAR. Tell that villain Saywell, if he ever more inſult me with his letters; I will expoſe him

him as his villainy deſerves. Do you know the contents of the letter you gave me ?

CIC. Oh, not a word of them: not I: no more than the maid in the moon.

HAR. It was then to inform me, that Mr. Ramble had an eſtate.

CIC. Aye, and a fine one too. That is true enough.

HAR. And that my father's ſituation might render me in want of one.

CIC. Humph !

HAR. That he would be happy to remove thoſe wants, domeſtic misfortunes might have created.

CIC. There was no harm in that.

HAR, If I would comply with his propoſals.

CIC. That is, I ſuppoſe, in an honourable way.

HAR. If they were honourable, as I believe them baſe; I would ſpurn them from me. You may have forgotten Greville. I never can.

CIC. Oh, no; I have not forgotten Mr. Greville. He was a charming young gentleman. But poor ſoul ! He is moſt likely turned into a fiſh long before this.

HAR. You mean, I ſuppoſe, in leaving me, and going to ſea, he ſhewed himſelf ſo cold a lover.

CIC. I mean, he has moſt likely long ere this ſeen the bottom of the ſea; been picked up

by a fiſh, and that fiſh picked up by another; till there is more fiſh, than fleſh, about him.

HAR. And ſo, Cicely,—I underſtand you.

CIC. Nay, nay, Miſs Harriet, I ſay nothing; but I am ſure, one live lover is worth fifty dead ones.

HAR. But I would have thee know; I would not give my dead Greville for all the living Rambles, this fine gay world can ſhew.

SCENE VI.

CICELY.

CIC. Harriet is right in her ſuſpicions. I would be honeſt; but my heart has got a weak corner in it.—I know of old, it has: a-h! *(ſighs)* and gold and glitter always found it out.

SCENE VII.

SAYWELL. CICELY.

SAY. Good Cicely!

CIC. Honeſt Saywell!

SAY. And thou haſt worked her to our purpoſe?

CIC. I have at laſt worked her to a reſolution——But in good truth I had a world of trouble.

SAY

SAY. Thou excellent piece of nature! Why I ſwear, thou lookeſt quite young and blooming. Huſſy, how your eyes gliſten!—Let me buſs thee for thy feats. *(kiſſes her.)* And as ſoon as we get to town, depend on it I will find buſineſs that ſhall bring thy talents into play.

CIC. Pooh! Old women, Mr. Saywell, are not to be fobbed off with kiſſes.

To little miſs
A melting kiſs
May be a titillation:
It is ſo new,
It is the cue
To love and inclination.
But ſoon as a woman has paſs'd the teen,
So heightened her appetite then is too keen
For love's meagre diet a kiſs:
The billing conceit with a ſneer ſhe diſdains,
With her eye ſpeaks a wiſh, and a hope entertains
Of ſome pledge more ſubſtantial of bliſs.

SAY. All that is very true. A very little knowledge of old women will teach it. And yet to make further demands, is a little unconſcionable. *(aſide.)*

CIC. That was a pretty bird's neſt, as you called it, which you ſhewed me yeſterday, with all its eggs in it.

SAY. Oh, is that all? *(aſide.)* Aye, ſo it was.

And

And there it is, Mrs. Cicely, at your ſervice. *(gives her a purſe.)* And ſo Harriet, you ſay, has at laſt reſolved.

CIC. Never to have any thing more to ſay either to you, or Mr. Ramble.

SAY. Why you old hag, you traitreſs, you devil!

CIC. Nay, ſtop that honeyed tongue. And bleſſings light upon thoſe ſweet, ſweet lips, and all the ſugared kiſſes.

SAY. Go in, you old toad; and bid Drill come hither. I will clear the houſe of every one of you.

SCENE VIII.

SAYWELL. SNAP.

SAY. Are you prepared?

SN. Charged, cocked, and primed. I only want the word of command. Is the farmer worth powder?

SAY. He can ſettle the buſineſs, whenever he pleaſes.

SN. Then I will have no bowels with him.

SAY. That is as much as to ſay, you ſometimes have.

SN. When the bird has no feathers on it, and there

there is a great deal of trouble, and little pay; then I have very great bowels indeed.

SAY. Drill, I muſt tell you, is not very rich. But then he has a pretty daughter.

SN. O—h! *(puts his finger to his noſe.)* Are you there, Mr. Saywell? Yes, yes, I have ſettled many a buſineſs of this kind through a wife, or a daughter: ſometimes for ſelf, as I may ſay; and ſometimes for my employer. Then I ſuppoſe you would have me behave to Mr. Drill prettily, —mild, and tender-hearted.

SAY. By no means. Be your very ſelf. For ſo ſhall we beſt enforce compliance. But here he comes. We will try fair means firſt. And if they fail; I leave you. Then make ready, preſent, fire.

SCENE IX.

SAYWELL. SNAP. DRILL.

SAY. Well, Maſter Drill, I hope you are now prepared to ſettle this buſineſs.

DR. And I hope, Mr. Saywell, you will give me a little time to ſettle it.

SAY. Now I will tell you exactly, how the caſe ſtands between us. I borrowed the four hundred pounds, on purpoſe to accommodate you. This here gentleman knows it.

SN.

Sn. Oh, upon my honour he did. And gave a huge premium in at the bargain.

Say. I am now called on for it: and either you, or I, muſt go to priſon.

Dr. You know, you offered me the money, you preſſed me to take it, you pointed out a ſpeculation that has half ruined me, and now you are determined to compleat my deſtruction.

Say. That is always the caſe, when pay-day comes. Is it not, Mr. Thingembob?

Sn. Why, as how I may ſay, it is pretty much the caſe. But is there no way to ſettle this matter?

Say. Yes there is; and a very ſhort one. Maſter Drill here has got a good clever daughter. Mr. Ramble is a gentlemen of vaſt fortune, is now in the country, and in want of a young perſon to ſuperintend his family, and would be glad of Miſs Drill. And four hundred pounds would be dirt to Mr. Ramble.

Of the power of woman to ſave, or deſtroy,
Who has not heard? King Tarquin ſhe hurl'd
From his throne; ſhe ſubverted old Troy;
And ſhe loſt poor Antonius the world.
To the Sabines and Rome ſhe gave peace;
She ſaved her old father of Greece;
And ſhe may ſave you, if you will.
So now, good Maſter Drill,

Of

Of the offer,
I proffer,
Think a little before you abuſe it:
For you may depend
On the word of a friend,
That if you refuſe it,
You'll repent it in vain;
Nor ever,
O never,
Will have ſuch an offer again.

DR. If Mr. Ramble have a particular attachment to my houſe; there is my old houſekeeper, Mrs. Cicely, whom you were hugging this morning; I dare ſay ſhe will be much at his honour's ſervice.

SAY. I was hugging!—

DR. Yes, Maſter Saywell; I ſaw a great deal of love paſs between you.

SAY. Ah, Friend Drill, you are a ſly rogue. And come, ſince you have found out my love for Cicely; I will undertake to clear you of a load of evils at once. Miſs Drill ſhall go to Mr. Ramble's; I will throw the bond into the fire; and take old Cicely in at the bargain. What ſay you, Farmer?

DR. I ſay, I owe you four hundred pounds: or for your impudence I would kick you to —

SAY. Your daughter, I ſuppoſe. And I will try if I cannot with her ſtrike a bargain.

SCENE

SCENE X

SNAP. DRILL.

SN. *(Drill going after Saywell.)* Stop, Sir, if you pleaſe.

DR. But I do not pleaſe.

SN. Then I muſt make you pleaſe.

DR. Who are you?

SN. Lord and maſter here.

DR. However if your lord and maſterſhip do not quickly move off; I will call in a hand or two from the Barn, to ſhew you the horſepond.

SN. Hearkye, friend, do you underſtand Greek?

DR. No: but I have ſpoken plain Engliſh. And you had beſt not force me to prove the truth of it.

SN. Why then lookye here, *(ſhews him a writ.)* one of the niceſt, cleaneſt, fineſt manuſcripts in all his majeſty's libraries.—I will conſtrue it to you.—Take David Drill's perſon and goods, &c. —at the ſuit of Simkin Saywell, Eſq.

DR. O Sir, your ſervant. I did not know your conſequence; any more than I do your name.

SN. My name, Sir, is Samuel Snap; very much

much at your ſervice: a name pretty well known amongſt knaves and fools by the diſtinguiſhing title of Captain Snap.

Dr. I thank you for your explanation. And now, noble Captain, pray what are your commands with me?

Sn. Only that you take a place at my ſide in my pleaſure cart: where we will jog ſoberly on to Shrewſbury gaol.

Dr. I am prepared for that, Sir, and all Mr. Saywell can further do. And if it were an eaſement to your horſe to know it; I could tell him, that on ſuch an occaſion he never drew a lighter conſcience.

Sn. Ha, ha, ha! my horſe and I care equally about conſciences. But as to your corporation, Maſter Drill, my horſe mayhap might wiſh it was not quite ſo well liquored with October. The regimen however of Shrewſbury gaol will be a powerful corrector.

Dr. Well, Sir, I have a few orders to give about my affairs; and then I am ready.

Sn. Aye, they need be very few: for I ſhall leave Mr. Saywell in poſſeſſion of your goods and chattels.

Dr. Does your authority go ſo far?

Sn. I am lord and maſter here. And then as to your daughter,—Saywell is a wild ſpark,—perhaps you had beſt not leave her with him.—

I would

I would rather adviſe you as a friend, for though as I told you I have no great portion of conſcience about me, I am a man of very friendly feelings, I would rather adviſe you to ſend your daughter to his honour Ramble's.

Dr. Villain, get out. *(offers to ſtrike.)* Patience, patience!

To a priſon damp and drear,
To a dungeon's cell,
To the cave of dread deſpair
Bear hence the child of care:
Yet ſhall conſcious virtue's ray
Dry up the courſing tear,
Sooth ſorrow's ſilent ſwell:
And damps and darkneſs chaſe away
From melancholy's chearleſs dome;
While I can ſtrike an honeſt breaſt, and ſay,
That all is well at home.

SCENE XI.

Saywell. Snap. Drill.

Say. What, all this time; and nothing done?

Sn. Yes, every thing is done. There is only a little demur about the diſpoſal of the farmer's daughter.

Say.

SAY. I am aſtoniſhed at the repugnance of his good ſenſe, and contracted notions. Does not he know, that daughters are ſold for worſe purpoſes every day, and by great folks too?

DR. Indeed I do not: and am happy in my ignorance.

SAY. Not ſo ignorant neither. You know well enough, great folks do not marry now-a-days, as you and your old Deborah might have done forty years ago, for love and liking. Money, money, money is the buſineſs. Are they not married this year, decorate the fond ſpouſe's forehead the next; grow brazen, and are diſcovered the third; obtain divorces on the fourth; and the fifth are married again? The round is as regular, as "War begets Poverty, Poverty Peace;" and might ſerve as well as that for the motto of an almanack.

SCENE XII.

HARRIET. SAYWELL. SNAP. DRILL.

HAR. O my father, my father! You ſhall not go: you ſhall not leave me.

SN. Come, come, Miſs; none of this foolery: we muſt be moving. I have other buſineſs on my hands.

HAR. Villains, you ſhall not ſeparate us.

DR. Be compoſed, my Child: all will be well.

SAY. So it may: for this young lady has it in her power, moſt advantageouſly to ſettle every thing.

DR. Accompliſhed Raſcal, that ſhe never ſhall.

HAR. Can I ſave my father?

SAY. Aye, and will not do it.

HAR. O could my griefs, O might my pain
A reſpite to my parent gain
From fell oppreſſion's rage;
My eaſe, my joys would I reſign,
Pleaſed to redeem with loſs of mine
The tranquil joys of age.

SAY. I will teach you, Miſs Harriet, how to do it; and on much eaſier terms. Only take upon you the management of Mr. Ramble's family, ride in his chariot, command his ſervants: and we will diſpatch the Captain on his other buſineſs.

DR. No, vile Inſtrument, ſhe has been taught other leſſons. She may ſay, her father was unfortunate: but never, never ſhall ſhe ſay, or hear it ſaid, her father was a villain.

SAY. Come, come, Snap; you know your buſineſs.

SN. Aye, aye; along.

HAR. O ſpare; good Saywell, ſpare my father.

SAY. 'Tis you, that will not ſpare him.

HAR.

HAR. I would give my life to ſpare him.

DR. But not your virtue, Harriet.

SAY. Where is your duty?

DR. Where is your innocence?

SAY. Where the affection to a father due?

DR. Where the love to the fond faithful Greville?

HAR. I will, I will ſave my father.

DR. Take care, Harriet, what you do. I am not your father.

SAY. Why, Farmer, you are delirious.

SN. I think ſo too.—I am off however: and he may take his choice of Shrewſbury gaol, or Bedlam.

HAR, One minute, good, ſweet Sir, by all the feelings of humanity.

SCENE XIII.

SAYWELL. SNAP. DRILL.

SAY. Now, Farmer, rail no more either at your ſtars, or us. They gave you a handſome daughter; we would have taken her ſecurity, and you would not let her give it.

DR. Yes, Heaven has given me a virtuous child; and will I am ſure protect her.

SAY. 'Tis plain you like a priſon.

SN. But the young lady ſeemed to ſay, ſhe had thought better of it.

SAY. And if ſhe do not; either he, or I, muſt have one.

SCENE XIV.

SAYWELL. SNAP. DRILL. WILLIAMS.

SAY. And pray, friend, what brought you hither?

WILL. The cry of diſtreſs: for I am a man.

DR. I am afraid, Sir, it was my daughter's cry; and aſk your pardon for her.

SAY. Did you not juſt now ſay, ſhe was not your daughter?

DR. I did. But I have adopted her: and ſay again, that ſhe ſhall not be ſacrified.

WILL. And it is well ſaid, honeſt Bluff. And as the impulſe of humanity, and not mere curioſity, hath made me a party in this fray; pray may I know the real cauſe of all the buſtle?

DR. 'Tis ſhort, Sir. And I was ready at firſt to ſettle it. Thoſe gentleman are come to take me to gaol; unleſs my child will redeem me by the ſacrifice of her innocence to their great and baſe employer. And I am ready to attend them.

WILL.

WILL. What, for the protection of an adopted child?

SAY. Right, Sir: a likely matter. There is more in the wind, than we are aware of.

WILL. And who is her real father?

DR. A gallant officer: who nobly fell in the defence of his country; and left her to the world, one worthy friend, and me.

WILL. Sayeſt thou ſo, old Ploughſhare? Then take me into the firm; and make me a fourth in it. And having got ſo far into the buſineſs, let us next know the amount of the demand.

SAY. I do not know, what you have to do either with the buſineſs, or the demand.

SN. I know, I will wait no longer.

WILL. I ſay, Farmer; what is the demand?

DR. Ah, Sir; it is too much: four hundred pounds.

SN. Aye and fifty to that.

WILL. *(turns aſide, takes his pocket book out of his pocket, and gives ſome notes to Drill.)* There, I believe, you will find notes for five hundred pounds. Pay the demand on you, and kick thoſe worthy gentlemen a little before their time to the —— *(Williams haſtily and abruptly goes away, as Harriet enters in a riding dreſs.)*

SCENE XV.

SAYWELL. SNAP. DRILL. HARRIET.

HAR. Now, my dear Father, I am ready. Still, ſtill they ſhall not ſeparate us. Our priſon will be a palace, while I tend you in it.

DR. Come to my boſom, my dear Harriet. Heaven, Heaven has heard thy duteous prayers; and in a ſtranger's ſhape ſent our good genius hither. Look here. *(ſhews the notes.)* Look there. *(points to Saywell and Snap.)*

HAR. Gracious Heaven! This all is thy myſterious work. And was that our deliverer, who as I entered, ſhot like lightening hence: as if, like all the world, he ſhunned the mournful manſion of adverſity?

DR. Yes, Harriet, he ſtole into affliction's dwelling, with more than virgin baſhfulneſs wiped the tear away, then fled, as if afraïd to meet the eye of gratitude.

HAR. So when his energetic powers
The genial ſun diſplays;
Matures the fruit, and paints the flowers
With his meridian blaze:

The

The Perſian bends, intent to pay
His tribute praiſe at cloſing day
To the empyreal light;
Who ſteals away, and ſhuns his praiſe,
Veiling his reſplendent rays
Beneath the ſhades of night.

SCENE XVI.

EMILIA. HARRIET.

EM. How does my Harriet? I grieve for her misfortunes, which I have juſt learned; and come to mingle with her ſocial tears. I wiſh I could do more.

HAR. Thanks to my kind friend. But a ſtranger's hand hath dried up mine.

EM. Shame, ſhame on friendſhip! But how-e'er directed, that generous act hath wiped away ſome drops of mine.

HAR. There are ſecret movements in this world's machine; that by ſome inviſible direction dry up tears and rivers, and convert ſtorms and ſorrows into ſunſhine.

EM. So ſays the flatterer hope.

SER. *(ſervant enters.)* Mr. Belmour wiſhes to ſpeak to Miſs Greville. *(exit Servant.)*

EM. Belmour! — my heart miſgives me. — Why purſue me hither?

HAR. His name and happineſs are ſo cloſely twined; he can purſue Emilia only with news of joy.

EM. Not if he come from my —— alas! from Mr. Melville.

SCENE XVII.

BELMOUR.

BEL. Sad is the proſpect, that diſplays
Of hope no flattering beam;
Yet more diſtreſsful are the flatterer's rays,
When ſhining with deluſive gleam:
But wretched he beyond compare,
Whoſe faireſt hope is but deſpair.

If Emilia liſten to the ſuit, which honour, gratitude, and even affection bid me urge; miſery marks me for her own. If ſhe reject it; I conſign her to ruin, whom I would die to render happy.

SCENE XVIII.

BELMOUR. EMILIA.

EM. What brings my Belmour here?

BEL. A tale of woe. Which has in object to pre-

to prevent a ſtep, that might with Mr. Melville injure you: for he alas, muſt be your anchor ſtill!

Em. What does my Belmour mean?

Bel. He means, Emilia, but knows not how to ſay it, he muſt ne'er be thine.

Em. Thou didſt not mean, thou didſt not ſay it. Or, if thou didſt, the vain unbodied words are all diſſolved in air: and, Belmour, thou ſtill art, ſtill ſhalt be, mine. Be mine!—Oh no: for I am abject, poor, and mean. What right have I to call the generous Belmour mine?

Bel. Do not thus wring my heart.

Em. And yet you knew me, Belmour, even when you gave your plighted vows to me, and ſwore you loved me. But enough: your oaths, your vows, that you did live for me, I give you back.

Bel. And all your promiſes of mutual love, and conſtancy to me, I do reſign. I am not what I was.

Em. Oh, no, no, no: for thou wert in my mind the finiſhed, fair exemplar of the man, a virgin's pen in wantoneſs of fancy might figure for the object of her love. Did prudence prompt this change then, or ſome fair with ſoul-entangling wiles ——

Bel. Contain thyſelf; and I will own, it was a female wrought it.

Em. Belmour, ah! Belmour, hadſt thou known

known my heart, hadſt thou, oh! hadſt thou ever loved as I do; thou wouldſt have been more gentle, and deceived me. Thou wouldſt have coined ſome other plea. Methinks, had avarice, or ambition, under guiſe of prudence, wrought this change, I could have borne it. But a rival in thy love.—

BEL. She, that hath ſhaken my ſoul's ſoft purpoſes ——

EM. Aye, who is ſhe?

BEL. Gigantic is her form: a hundred hands ſhe brandiſhes; and every hand doth launch a baleful bolt. Horror is in her eye; and deſolation on her ſtep attends. The caitiff victim of her power all ſhun: even friendſhip ſhuns him: Love, Emilia; Love ſhould ſhun him too. Men call her name, Misfortune. Read this. *(gives a letter, which Emilia reads.)*

SIR,

I am ſorry to inform you of the bankruptcy of the French Eaſt India Company: on which bottom your property was lodged, and all is loſt.

Yours,

Peter Duqueſne.

BEL. When the ſun and the ſhower
From the bud call the flower,

Whoſe

Whoſe fragrance impregnates the air;
With the gay eye of pleaſure,
Pomona's rich treaſure.
We view in the bloſſom ſo fair.
Till the keen and ſearching blaſt
Our bright ſun of hope o'ercaſt;
And the clouds, in anger toſt,
Shooting hailſtones, arm'd with froſt,
Of all our fair proſpects the ruin compleat,
And ſhatter the bloſſom ſo fair, and ſo ſweet.

Melville, Emilia, is a worthy man: obey him, forget Belmour, and be happy.

EM. Pleads Belmour thus?

BEL. I do, I urge thee to it. Nay, if thou wilt comply; I further promiſe, that I will try to forget thee. Or when I do remember thee, the pleaſing thought, that thou art happy, will ſooth all my woes: and thus, if I forget thee not, Emilia; remembering thee, I ſhall forget my cares.

EM. My Belmour!—For I now will call thee mine; nor ſhall the racks of fortune tear me hence, while I have power to hold. Her random hand again hath levelled all diſtinction 'twixt us.

BEL. Not ſo, Emilia: thou mayeſt riſe again. And I——the word is wide.——

EM. And will contain us both.

BEL. Ah! But there muſt be elbow room for thee;

thee; for one ſo ſoftly, delicately bred: thou art not formed to ſtruggle in a crowd.

Em Aided by love and thee, thou doſt not know, I know not my own powers. My ſex's pride, my education's wants, I could forget; to be companion of thy loweſt ſtate.

Bel. And becauſe thou art true, ſhall I be cruel? Becauſe thy love doth ſingle Belmour out; ſhall Belmour pull down ruin on thy head? Is this the love I bear my dear Emilia?

Em. And is thy Emily's love no better known to thee?

Bel. Had I the glance of hope, that I might ere be worthy ſo much goodneſs:—but I have none; no hope of happineſs, but ſuch as ſprings from hopes of thine. And with ungracious hand ſhall I pluck that fair bud? Forbid it, truth! Forbid it every power of gentle love! Determined as I am, thy cares alone can ere wound Belmour's ſoul beyond the power of bearing. Penury, and toil, the ſcoff of pity, and averted eye of friendſhip,—theſe, and what other ſhafts, if the rude world have ſhafts in deadlier poiſon ſteeped than theſe, ſhall loſe their power on me. But thy pangs, ſweet Emily, thy pangs would bend my ſoul.

Em. Fie, fie! thou doſt not know me, Belmour. To toil and penury thou canſt never ſtoop, but Emily will bend as low.

BEL. Why then, together, Emily, we'll together go, and buffet with the ſtorms a frowning world and poverty may raiſe.

In her carriage ambition unenvied ſhall roll,
On dainties let luxury feaſt;
Be frugal my board, and humble my bowl,
And love ſhall to both give a zeſt.

EM. Be the ſickle, or ſword alternate the care
Of my ſoldier, my ruſtic; his aim,
To gather the corn, or to grapple for fame:
If the field be is bed,
I will watch at his head;
If a hut be his dome,
I will welcome him home;
His labours, and dangers, I'll ſhare.

End of the Second Act.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

Melville Lodge.

BELMOUR.

BEL. Yes, I am reſolved.—I will not cloud the proſpects of Emilia. Now do I wiſh, that I could ſteal unſeen to her, and bid my laſt adieu.

Gentle power of ſoft deſire,
That loveſt retired to lead along
Thy votary from the buſy throng,
My footſteps to Emilia bear,
Shape my accents to her ear,
Not wing'd with love's electric fire:
With icy hand, and leaden dart,
Benumb the ſofteſt warmeſt heart:
And teach, in aid of my deſign,
That heart to ſympathize with mine;
While my faltering accents prove,
I loſe myſelf, to ſave my love.

SCENE

SCENE II.

WILLIAMS. BELMOUR.

WILL. Belmour, well met. Prythee why ſo much care upon thy brow?

BEL. On your's I am happy to ſee ſo little. And if I have taken the burthen from you; the reflection will make my load the lighter. *(ſighs.)*

WILL. But why that ſigh? It ill agrees with a boſom liberal and warm as Belmour's.

BEL. Breath'd I a ſigh? It ſtole out undeſign'd. For indeed, as you intimate, my heart has generally contrived to keep on the windy ſide of care. But fortune ſometimes blows ſo hard a gale. ——

WILL. The brave man, Belmour, is above her reach.

Goddeſs of the lowering brow,
With aſpect ſtern, and iron heart;
In vain you ſtring your adverſe bow,
In vain you launch th' envenom'd dart:
With your ſhafts, and your venom in vain you aſſail
The heart of the brave; you will never prevail:
Its temper is firmneſs, Adamantine its mail.

SCENE

SCENE III.

MELVILLE. FIREBRACE. WILLIAMS.

MEL. My dear Sir, I am glad to find you here. —Col. Firebrace.—

WILL. And I once more to ſee the maſter of this hoſpitable manſion.—Your ſervant Sir. *(to Firebrace.)*

FIRE. Sir, your's. Is this the gentleman, Mr. Melville, you told me was in ſo bad a ſtate of health? Upon my word, I think he wears on his countenance both health and ſpirits.

MEL, Why yes; 'faith, my friend looks, as if the north eaſt wind had not blown ſo keen, as he apprehended.

WILL. In good truth, Mr. Melville, I begin to be aſhamed of my querulous humours. Since we laſt parted, I have gained a great deal of knowledge. I have learned that there may be people in the world more miſerable than myſelf: and that with a little look-out every man may find ſomething worth living for.

The pathway of life is through weeds, and through flowers,
Its climate is ſunſhine, and ſhowers :
The woodbine, the roſe,
Each a flower is, that blows,
Emblematic of friend and of lover ;
The weeds will produce,
Though latent, their uſe,
That uſe it is ours to diſcover.
In the garland of life let us wreathe then its flowers,
And their virtues extract from the weeds ;
Let us ſeize, and improve, as they run, the fleet hours,
And the darkeſt illume by the blaze of our deeds.

(Servant enters with newſpapers and exit.)

MEL. You may be ſurpriſed, Colonel, to ſee me ſo great a newſmonger. But the fact is, thoſe papers are leſs for my own uſe, than that of my neighbours : who have a general invitation on a poſt-day, to take a cup of chocolate with me, and read them. And this I do, to give every man an opportunity of ſeeing what is going forward with his own eyes, and thereby prevent him from becoming the credulous dupe of a village orator. There is Mr. Snarle, I ſee, coming up the avenue.

FIRE. He is one of thoſe ſharp ſighted gentry, who can ſee liberty endangered, if the miniſter chance to eat turtle in the city ; and plots and

treaſons in a ſocial dinner at the crown and anchor.

WILL. Ha, ha, ha! To our friend's character the colonel, I find, is no ſtranger.

FIRE. No, nor to his friend's; honeſt Peter Puff the pyeman. Pray how does Peter go on?

MEL. It is very poſſible you may ſoon ſpy him here, peeping about for his oracle: from whom as uſual he retails politics at ſecond hand, and ſerves them out with his penny pies at the neighbouring markets.

SCENE IV.

MELVILLE. WILLIAMS. FIREBRACE. SNARLE.

SN. Mr. Melville, your humble ſervant.—Col. Firebrace, I believe.—Sir, I am happy to meet you again. *(to Williams.)*

FIRE. At your ſervice, Sir.

MEL. Mr. Snarle, I am glad to ſee you. And what news bring you.

SN. Why truly none.

MEL. That is not like yourſelf.

SN. Pray, have any of you heard any thing of Mr. Belmour?

MEL.

MEL. Why, have you any news of him?

FIRE. I knew he would not come with an empty budget.

WILL. I juſt now met him.

SN. Not quite ſo much the butterfly, as when you ſaw him laſt.

WILL. I met him, Snarle, with a cloud upon the brow, that nature formed for ſunſhine; if merit could command it.

SN. Aye, fortune is a jilting jade;
She cares a ſtraw for no man:
All ſunſhine now, and now all ſhade,
She now will ſmile, anon will frown,
Now takes you up, now throws you down,
She loves to range,
Is given to change,
And is a very woman,

Poor fellow! I am ſorry for him.

FIRE. Why?

SN. There is an ugly rumour.

FIRE. If againſt him; rumour lies.

SN. I am ſure, I wiſh ſhe may. It is ſaid, his expectations from the Eaſt are ſhipwrecked. I have not heard the particulars.

WILL. So much the better. For then you

are the more at liberty to indulge fancy in framing them.

MEL. The papers, Gentlemen, I am afraid, are rather barren to day.

SN. The war however does its part towards filling them. It does rarely well too, Colonel, for you gentlemen of the cockade. But I do not know who elſe get any thing by it.

MEL. I think, Mr. Snarle, you are under ſome obligations to it, as a general ſubject of ſarcaſm. For I do not know what gentlemen, who carry a great deal of phlegm about them, would do without it.

SN. And to thoſe, who want phlegm, it will ſupply it. A fine oak tree of your's Mr. Melville, I ſaw blown down, lying acroſs the road as I came along. An ugly ſight in ſuch times as theſe: for whenever I ſee an oak tree fallen; I think of our poor navy.

FIRE. Never be afraid, Mr. Snarle, for our poor navy. When our laſt oak is fallen; we will build our ſhips in our enemy's docks.

MEL. Right, Colonel: We have ſome lords, that are excellent ſhip carpenters.

The Briton's beſt dock is the ocean at large,
His muſic the ſweeteſt, that ſounds to the charge.
His guns and his balls are the tools of his trade,
Which no courage can baffle, no art can evade.
Britannia is the word: ſure magic is in it:
Till he come to cloſe quarters, he chides the ſlow minute.
Blow briſkly, ye gales,
And ſwell her proud ſails;
Now windward ſhe wears,
Crowds her ſails, and makes way,
Now downward ſhe bears:—
See her lightening! hark, her thunder!
While old Neptune beholds with delight, and with wonder,
His Britons build fleets in a day.

As to the loſs of my tree however, I am ſorry for it. But the war, Mr Snarle, did not blow it down.

SN. The war, I believe, before it is over, will blow us all down.

MEL. Then it will at leaſt have this good effect; that it will bring us all to that ſummit of political happineſs, equality.

SN. And pray, Colonel, what news do you bring from the camp? Do you think the militia will fight.

FIRE. I know they will.

SN. Why, did you ever ſee them fight?

FIRE. No; but I have ſmelled powder abroad, and felt the force of balls. And there I

have ſeen our Britiſh lads fight gallantly. And if I take upon me to ſay, our militia troops know how to handle their arms; I will leave you to ſay, why they ſhould not fight here for every thing that is dear to them, as gallantly as they did in Flanders, where they had nothing to loſe.

SN. Ha, ha, ha! Every thing, that is dear to them!—What ſingle thing, good Colonel, has a poor man to loſe in England?—Nothing, nothing: and they know it, Colonel.

MEL. I will tell you, Mr. Snarle, what a poor man, what the pooreſt has to loſe.—His potatoe yard; perhaps his pig; perhaps his cow. He has his little cot to loſe, a palace to him that never knew a better: he has the wife of his boſom; his children, dear to him as the ruddy drops of life. And he has the ſecurity of the laws for all thoſe comforts: the ſame ſecurity that fences the property of you and me.

SN. You are warm, Mr. Melville.

MEL. So I am. There are ſome topics, that make me fooliſhly ſo.

WILL. To wave the ſubject:—do you hear, Gentlemen, who is to be your new collector of the land-tax, in the room of Mr. Stamp?

MEL. The Colonel, I believe, can inform you. It was the news of the camp, I underſtand, that we have him here. Did not you ſay, Colonel,

(*pri-*

(privately beckoning Firebrace) that Mr. Snarle was to be the man?

FIRE. That was the general report.

SN. I never heard a word of it.

FIRE. Through the intereſt, it was ſaid, of —

MEL. Lord Ramble. And I thought it very likely: as I know his lordſhip always profeſſed a great regard for Mr. Snarle.

SN. Quite new to me, indeed: quite unlooked for, I declare it.

WILL. I give you joy, Mr. Snarle, with all my heart.

MEL. And I.

FIRE. And I.

SN. I thank you, Gentlemen. But indeed it is more, than I could have looked for.

MEL. From henceforward, Mr. Snarle, I dare ſay you will think better of the cockade, than you have been uſed to do. War increaſes land-tax: and the increaſe of land-tax raiſes the collector's fees.

SN. Excuſe me, Sir; I have no quarrel with cockades and war, nor ever had. All I ſay is, that the beſt things may be abuſed.

WILL. So in truth they may; as the paper I hold in my hand teſtifies; even the choice bleſſings of eating and drinking: for here is a newſpaper ſtuffed with nothing, but revolution dinners and toaſts.

SN. I wonder, ſome ſtop is not put to thoſe kinds of meeting.

FIRE. What, lay an embargo upon eating and drinking?

MEL. But ſure, Mr. Snarle, you did not always think ſo hardly of them.

SN. Perhaps I might not: but the object of them appears more open and undiſguiſed, than it uſed to be.

MEL. To the purged eye ſo it does, Mr. Snarle.

When we look through our glaſſes
At an object that paſſes,
How ſmall at one end, and how large at the other!
'Tis exactly the caſe,
When we look through a place,
And in judgment we differ ſo one from another.
Say, courtiers, ſay, patriots, is it not ſo?
I wiſh there were places for all;
Oh, then how glidingly glib would things go!
While through the ſame end,
With the eye of a friend,
We all ſpied the errors were ſmall.

SER. *(ſervant enters.)* Here are his Honour Ramble, Farmer Butters, and others come about juſtice buſineſs; and beg to ſpeak to your worſhip.

MEL.

MEL. Will not Mr. Ramble walk in?

SER. No, Sir: he ſaid not.

MEL. Then I will attend him. Your leave, Gentlemen. *(exit ſervant.)*

FIRE. I will take a turn in the garden.

WILL. And if you will give me leave, Colonel, I will attend you.

SN. And I will juſt caſt my eye over the papers.

MEL. *(apart to Firebrace.)* To look for the collectorſhip I ſuppoſe.

SCENE V.

SNARLE.

SN. *(takes up a newſpaper.)* This was very kind in Lord Ramble indeed.

SER. *(ſervant enters.)* Peter Puff, Sir, if you be at leiſure, deſires to ſpeak to you.

SN. I am rather engaged: but I will ſpeak to him.

SCENE VI.

SNARLE. PUFF.

PUFF. I heard you were alone: and ſo—

SN. Great news, Peter.

PUFF. Have the French landed?

SN. No: I do not think they will land.

PUFF. Why you thought they would, laſt week.

SN. True: but we are changing our meaſures.

PUFF. How changing our meaſures?

SN. Getting rid of corruption, becoming unanimous.

PUFF. Whew!—What new politics are theſe.

SN. And doſt thou know, Peter?

PUFF. Hiſt! Secret intelligence, I ſuppoſe.

SN. No; public: public as the day. The talk of the camp. Doſt thou know, Peter?

PUFF. No: cannot gueſs.

SN. Know then, that I am to be the new collector of the land-tax.

PUFF And is that all?

SN. All!—Doſt thou not ſee the force of it?

PUFF. No: do not ſee what good that will do to poor old England?

SN. A great deal. Shall not I know how much

much money to the land tax this county produces? Shall not I know how much is paid into the treaſury? Shall not I know how much ought to be paid out of the treaſury? Shall not I be in the ſecret?

PUFF. But ſtill I do not ſee —

SN. And you ſhall attend me, and write the receipts.

FUFF. O——h.

SN. Things will ſoon go better, Friend Puff, depend on it.

PUFF. You have made my heart leap for joy. Poor old England will be ſaved. And we ſhall help to ſave it.

Oh, what a turn!
I fire, I burn:
Let us be going,
I long to be doing,
And writing receipts for the good of old England.

SCENE VII.

WILLIAMS. FIREBRACE.

WILL. I am a convert, Colonel, to your opinions.

FIRE.

FIRE. And I wiſh, Sir, all the world were converts to ſome of your's.

WILL, I aſſure you, I begin to think more favourably of this little planet, than I have long been uſed to do.

FIRE. Depend on it, there is not in this world of man a cypher; that does not voluntarily make himſelf ſuch.

SCENE VIII.

WILLIAMS. FIREBRACE. MELVILLE.

MEL. You find, Colonel, what pliant ſtuff our friend Snarle's principles are made of.

WILL. The Colonel and I ſaw him buſtle down the avenue, with his humble friend at his elbow.

FIRE. I am afraid he is going about, to put the news of his promotion in circulation; and at the ſame time the authority, on which he received it.

MEL. No matter: we will let him enjoy his deluſion a little longer; it will do him no harm. Time will ſet him right: and we muſt get off as well as we can.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

MELVILLE. WILLIAMS. FIREBRACE. SNARLE.

SN. So there has been a deſperate fray, I find, between Mr. Ramble and Farmer Butters.

MEL. Did you hear the particulars?

SN. Every mouth is full of it. His honour, they ſay, had been a little too civil to the farmer's wife; ſhe was rather ſqueamiſh, the farmer fell upon Ramble: his man did by Saywell the ſame; and the young ſparks got a plaguy drubbing.

MEL. It is pretty near the truth.

FIRE. The farmer's wife, it ſeems, was an Engliſh one. We have not yet, Mr. Snarle, got French manners amongſt us.

SN. I hope we never ſhall.

SER. *(Servant enters.)* 'Squire Ramble, Sir, inſiſted on me coming to tell you; that if you did not immediately releaſe him; he would have you before the Court of Kings Bench before a month was over.

MEL. Go, and tell Mr. Ramble, he muſt put up with the company of a conſtable, and the confinement of my library, till he has made compenſation to the injured parties. And he may take me, if he pleaſe, before the King himſelf, God bleſs

bleſs him! And I think, for all I have done I ſhall have his Majeſty's pardon.

SN. But might not, Mr. Melville, I aſk it with ſubmiſſion, might there not be a little reſpect paid to a gentleman of Mr. Ramble's rank?

MEL. The laws of England, Sir, know nothing of rank. They know no difference, between the hutted villager, and the inhabitant of a palace.

FIRE. This, Mr. Snarle, if I underſtand equality, is ſomething vaſtly like it. Now go to France, and weigh it againſt the name: and ſee which kicks the beam.

The bleſſings of liberty would you poſſeſs,
Go ſeek it in France till you find it:
If you're plunder'd, and robb'd, you are all in a meſs;
'Tis equality, ſo never mind it.
If, of age the ſupporters, your ſon or your treaſure,
Requiſition demand, whoſe meaning is ſeizure;
Yet to the ton
Of the petit cannon,
We will lead up with glee
The bonny blithe dance
Of the patriots in France,
With the heart-trilling airs
Of the poiſſonnieres.
Round liberty tree.

SCENE

SCENE X.

MELVILLE. WILLIAMS. FIREBRACE.
SNARLE. BELMOUR. EMILIA.

EM. Of this act of diſobedience to your will here do I ſue for pardon, where I ne'er yet knew any plead in vain; and for your permiſſion to join a portionleſs poor hand with his, who has my heart.

MEL. You know I have no juſt authority to counteract your will; believe me, Emily, it is my wiſh to ſee you happy. And for the means you muſt conſult yourſelf. You know my opinion.

EM. You oft have told me, Sir, never to truſt for happineſs on ſplendid ſcenes of ſtate.

MEL. True, Emily. Happineſs is not confined to ſtate. Nor does it always dwell in cottages.

EM. But with content, and love, wherever found, ſhe dwells. Why is my Belmour ſilent? For ſure, perſuaſion dwells on Belmour's tongue.

MEL. Belmour perhaps comes not to plead your ſuit.

BEL. Indeed he does not. So hear, good Sir, not the impetuous Belmour, pillowed on fortune's lap: but Belmour poor and ſhipwrecked

in

in a ſtormy world. By your paternal care this lady has been trained in all the gentleneſs of poliſhed eaſe; her mind, by nature caſt in a ſuperior mould, ſhining with all the luſtre art can give; her perſon ſuch, as angels might be drawn from. Ill then would ſuch rare charms comport with meanneſs and obſcurity. O give them, Sir, to blaze in their juſt ſphere: and ſhe may claim the higheſt.

EM. What means my Belmour?

BEL. To gaze at diſtance on Emilia's happineſs, in ſuch exalted ſtation as her merit claims. 'Tis true, I wooed thee once; but as a man, baſking in fortune's ſunſhine. We knew not then each other, or ourſelves.

EM. Good Sir, believe him not. His vows were plighted to me, when he knew my fall; in birth and fortune knew how very low Emilia was fallen.

BEL. Belmour had then a fortune: and Emily did not want one.

EM. No, Belmour, no: we did confirm our mutual vows, even after time had brought the whole of dire misfortune's crowded train to light. And then thou ſoothedeſt, and talkedſt to me of love and happineſs. And ſure they dwell with thee; though penury make our bed, and ſpread the ſcanty board.

BEL. Save, ſave, worthy Sir, this generous giri

girl from ruin: and take her to your favour. Far hence I will fly: and never more ſhall her ſweet peace be hurt, nor ſhe eſtranged from her obedience by the preſence of one, whom rude misfortune hath marked out, as Belmour.

Sn. 'Faith and troth, Mr. Belmour judges like a prudent man. Your high bred ladies, without fortunes, are like high bred race horſes, without foot. More coſt than worſhip, as the ſaying is. Did not I always ſay, Mr. Belmour was a ſenſible man?

When the moon ſo edged with honey
Hath fill'd its orb, and felt its wane;
Tired of love, the penſive ſwain
Thinks a little about money;
Sighs, and thinks, and ſighs again.

Bel. Periſh that baſe-born thought! No: were ſhe friendleſs, poor, and abject as myſelf; though wealth and rank, in all the luring ſhapes that beauty's ſelf could wear, ſhould tempt me: oh, then how bleſt to call Emilia mine!

Em. Yes, yes. I knew thou wert my Belmour ſtill.

Bel. Hah!—Why did my haſty ſpirit at a fool's chiding yield up a conqueſt o'er myſelf, I had half made for thee? Then to perſiſt; un-

friended, undowried, even to the ſhining trinket on the finger, thus do I take thee as the world's beſt good: and will no longer rail at fortune for all her rubs.

MEL. What ring is that, Emilia; to which Mr. Belmour's alluſion hath attracted my eye? *(Emilia gives it to Melville, who looks anxiouſly at it.)*

BEL. Aye, give it up, Emilia.—A ring of ſtraw will bind two hearts, like ours. Give the proud luſtre of the diamond orb to thoſe, who want it more, than we do.

MEL. Where had you, Emily, this ring?

EM. It was the preſent of Miſs Drill, bought by her father of old Cicely.

MEL. Oh, 'tis, it is ——. Cicely!—And where is ſhe?

EM. I believe in the houſe. She juſt now walked up with Miſs Drill: who came to thank that worthy man, *(pointing to Williams)* for his late bounty to her honeſt father. I will this inſtant fetch her. *(Emilia exit.)*

SN. More juſtice buſineſs, I ſuppoſe.

WILL. Yes a companionable piece for that of your friend Ramble. The old woman and he may go to the houſe of correction together.

SN. I never thought any good of that old witch.

SCENE

SCENE XI.

MELVILLE. WILLIAMS. FIREBRACE. SNARLE. BELMOUR. EMILY. CICELY. HARRIET.

CIC. *(without, following Harriet.)* Oh, Miſs Greville, Miſs Greville hath undone me. Oh!—Oh!—This curſed ring will hang me.

SN. What does the old fool make ſuch a pother about? She is not worth a rope.

MEL. *(Eagerly taking hold on Cicely, ſhews her the ring.)* Look here, Good Woman;—do you know this ring?

CIC. Know it, Sir!—Know that ring!

SN. Guilt ſticks to the old beldame's tongue; and I'll warrant, an oath will not choak her.

None of your ſhuffling, and turning, and twining:
Speak to the point, and have done with your whining.

CIC. You ſurly old cur,
Wherever you go,
You make ſuch a ſtir;
That there is no bearing
Your ranting and tearing,
Your lying and ſwearing,
Oh! no, no, no.

MEL. Anſwer my queſtion; and anſwer it with ſtricteſt truth: or I will ——This is no matter to be trifled with.

CIC. Do then, pray, good Sir, have patience: and I will tell you all I know of it: indeed I will.

MEL. And in the tale omit no tittle: gloſs o'er with ſoftening lie no ſingle circumſtance: and, far as I am concerned, thou ſhalt be freely pardoned.

CIC. I may depend on that?—

MEL. Thou mayeſt.

SN. And methinks, that ſavours a good deal of illegal colluſion, Maſter Upright. *(apart to Williams.)*

CIC. Some twenty years, ago, I was recommended to the ſervice of an Engliſh lady at Bologne. And from thence, after a ſhort ſtay there, we went to Dunkirk: where my miſtreſs, for ſhe was great with child, was three days after our arrival brought to bed of twins, a boy and girl; and on the fifth day after died.

MEL. And the children where?—

CIC. Do not fright me, Sir; and I will proceed with truth. Warned of her approaching end, ſhe called me to her; bade me take care of her two infants; and carry them to a Sir Thomas Loveworth's at Summerwell: and at the ſame time, with a purſe of money for myſelf, gave me a box ſealed with three ſeals, which ſhe directed me to carry with them.

MEL. And thou —

CIC. In part executed her commands: took of the ſweet babes, as who would not, good care; and carried them according to my charge to Summerwell. But curioſity beguiled me to break the ſeals, and ſeize on the contents: which were a purſe of gold, two bracelets ſet in diamonds, and that ring.

SN. I knew ſhe would come to no good: gallows are written on her face in capitals.

MEL. Good; do not interrupt her.

CIC. There was a letter too.

SN. A forgery: I will lay my life on it. Theft, and forgery: if Mr. Ramble be puniſhed for a frolic, the devil muſt ſtand her friend, if ſhe be not hanged.

CIC. Thinking that two poor babes, without the treaſures intended to accompany them, would be but a poor preſent, and that I might be roughly rewarded for my pains; I laid them ſecretly in the garden houſe, which I heard Sir Thomas often viſited, and where I learned, for in thoſe parts I ſtaid to know the iſſue, he found and placed them with a careful nurſe.

SN. It was a mercy, the old devil did not murder them.

CIC. I then returned to London: but for four years did ne'er enjoy ſweet peace of mind on thoſe two babes' account, and therefore jour-

neyed once more to Summerwell, reſolved to confeſs the theft, and plead for pardon.

Sn. But the devil, I ſuppoſe, ſtood in the gap between her and her good reſolution.

Cic. But there I found the knight had left the place, and lived no one knew where. Indeed, Your Worſhip, this is the very truth and all I know.

Mel. Couldſt thou produce that letter; it would go a great way towards cancelling all.

Sn. What, compound felony! *(apart.)*

Cic. I happen to have it about me. For underſtanding, had it not been for ſome ſtrange gentleman ſent from the clouds to my maſter Drill, we were all to have been ouſted this morning; I packed up my little property, and put this box in my pocket. You will find the letter and bracelets there. The pictures, I mean; for the jewels ——

Sn. Are, I ſuppoſe, dropped out. And in thy poſſeſſion, they muſt have been plaguy well ſet indeed, to have kept their places. *(Cicely gives Melville a box.)*

Har. *(to Williams.)* Worthy Sir, in my father's name, I am come to —

Will. To confirm me, Miſs, I hope as partner in the firm; to which I this morning paid my firſt depoſit. For the preſent however, we have things of more importance before us.

Har.

HAR. While you the ſigh
Of ſympathy
O'er ſorrows not your own expreſs;
Accept the tribute lay,
The heart delights to pay,
Diſburthen'd from diſtreſs.
The proudeſt trait of human nature
In your larger breaſt we find:
Mine be the humbler, ſofter feature;
Bluſhing in a grateful mind.

SN. *(apart to Firebrace.)* Pray, Colonel, can you tell who in particular it was, of whom you heard the news of the collectorſhip.

FIRE. No, 'faith, I cannot. 'Twas rumour, general rumour.

Rumour is a noiſy jade,
With open ear, and forked tongue;
Whate'er is heard, is doubly ſaid;
Nor heeds ſhe whether right or wrong.
Yet when the tale is a pleaſing relation,
'Tis beſt to believe,
She does not deceive;
For while the Illuſion
Laſts, though a deluſion,
Of truth it has all the delightful ſenſation.

MEL. *(Having received the box, and opened it, takes out the bracelets, and looks at one of the pictures, and then at Emily: then takes out the letter, and looks earneſty at the direction.)* 'Tis true: the character, the well known character, lives graven on my mind. *(opens the letter and reads.)*

Dear Friend,

An Engliſh family, to whom I was well known, arrived at Bologne, and took lodgings at the ſame houſe where I was. To prevent a diſcovery of my ſituation, I immediately ſet out for Dunkirk; where I was three days ago delivered of twins, a boy and girl. My Phyſician gives me little hope of ever ſeeing my dear Loveworth more. This caſquet contains my little worldly ſtore. Be kind, and cheriſh, in the dear babes, the memory of your affectionate unfortunate

EMILIA.

(drops the letter, and runs to embrace Emilia.) O my child, my child!

BEL. Then ſhe is loſt indeed.

EM. And do I live to hear a father's name, and hang upon his boſom, and feel a joy, in all my checquered life unknown before.

MEL.

MEL. My child, my Emily: how have I wounded thy ſoft heart, thou lovely image of my dear Emilia!—Thou hadſt a brother too.—Ah me! poor, exiled boy!—hard, obdurate father!—Is Belmour's brow on this occaſion clouded?

BEL. Heaven knows, it is not.

MEL. Though nobles flattered me with their ſuit, I would give this hand to him who beſt deſerves it. Here, take it, Belmour: and with it a father's bleſſing.

BEL. I cannot thank you, as I would.

MEL. I know the workings of thy mind: and aſk no other thanks.

FIRE. Lend us your hand, Old Friend. *(takes Melville by the hand.)* When I ſee a father give his daughter leave to marry the man ſhe loves; and equaliſe him to her on the broad baſe of merit only: I honour liberty and equality, though names ſomewhat worſe for wearing.

MEL. Emilia, Belmour, now is your's. And though I truſt your honour; ſomething there is of myſtery in your connection with that young lady, *(pointing to Harriet)* I wiſh explained: for I muſt ſay, it hath drawn cenſure on you.

BEL. An explanation, claimed by ſuch authority, is not to be reſiſted: and I will give it briefly as I can.—Her mother was the daughter of a clergyman. She had a brother, who with a college friend, high ſpirited and gay, exchanged the

the muſe's tablets for the ſword. That friend, a younger brother of an opulent family in Wales, oft viſited at her father's houſe, and ſtole into the daughter's heart.—I fear I am tedious.

WILL. Pray, go on.

BEL. On one of thoſe viſits, when every moment flew winged with love, a deadly bolt was ſped. A ſummons called the friends immediately away, to embark for foreign ſervice. Here would I throw a veil over that night, when reaſon ſlept, and love, and pity, and apt occaſion filled all the ſails, that paſſion ſet. To that night that orphan owes her exiſtence. In the firſt general battle, cloſe at each other's ſide, the two friends glorioufly fell. Her mother, wrung with grief, and fearful through conſcioufneſs of her growing ſhame to meet her father's rigid eye, left his houſe. Her heart, ere long, yielded to the ſtorm of fate: and dying, to her friend's, my mother's, charge ſhe left her young orphan: whom a parent's laſt requeſt transferred to me.

WILL. What was her father's name?

BEL. Following her father's name, hers ſhould be Harriet Williams.

WILL. *(throws himſelf into Harriet's arms.)* My Harriet, mine! *(Harriet faints in his arms.)* Look up, my love: look on thy father.

HAR. My father! Where is he? Where am I?

WILL. In thy father's arms.

HAR. Father indeed. My father, doubly ſuch: who gave me firſt exiſtence: and ſnatched me next from ruin.

SER *(Servant enters.)* A letter for Mr. Belmour.

BEL. Where is it?

SER. The young man ſays, it is a letter of conſequence: and he muſt deliver it himſelf.

MEL. Bid him come in then, and deliver it.

SCENE XII.

MELVILLE. WILLIAMS. FIREBRACE.
SNARLE. BELMOUR. EMILIA.
HARRIET. CICELY. GREVILLE.

(Greville in the dreſs of a Dutch ſailor, preſents a letter to Belmour, which he opens, and reads.)

BEL. *(reads)*

SIR,

I was diſappointed in making my remittance to you as I meaned to have done on France; and have ſent it on the Bank of Amſterdam: of which you have hereby advice from your humble Servant

H. S. PEARSON.

Then

Then Belmour is again himſelf,
And leſs unworthy his Emilia's heart.

EM. Wrong not thy Emily's judgment: pelf,
Though it ſometimes, ſpangling bright,
Hide a bad heart out of ſight;
Beaming bright, howe'er it ſhine,
Can no luſtre add to thine,
Nor make thee other than thou ever wert.

FIRE. Come you immediately from Amſterdam?

GRE. Immediately.

SN. And what news, Sir, bring you from thence?

GRE. None, Sir. But in the capacity of a German doctor, I bring an excellent univerſal remedy.

FIRE. Againſt what diſeaſes, my young Galen?

GRE. A large claſs, that you Engliſhmen are very apt to be troubled with, ariſing from climate, government, even times, and taxes.

SN. A valuable ſecret, *(to Williams)* when the north eaſt wind blows freſh.

FIRE. A great acquiſition, Mr. Snarle, ſhould you loſe the collectorſhip.

GRE. It is only to go, in the conveyance that brought me hither, to Amſterdam; and there for one month partake of French fraternization,

zation, and all the French bleſſings that it brought with it: and if my preſcription fail, ſay I am no doctor.

BEL. And pray, Sir, may I know, to whom I am obliged for the conveyance of a letter of ſo much conſequence to me?

GRE. *(throws off his Dutch cap)* To Greville. *(runs up to Melville, who haſtily meets and embraces him.)* My uncle! beſt of friends!

MEL. Thy father.—O my boy!—my long loſt boy!

GRE. My ſiſter!—my dear Emilia!—*(to Emily.)* My Belmour!—My Friend! *(to Belmour.)*

BEL. Thy brother:—Gallant Greville.

GRE. *(ſeeing Harriet, runs up to her.)* What. and my Harriet too:

WILL. *(taking Harriet's hand, gives it to Greville.)* Yes, *thy* Harriet.

GRE. 'Tis too much—father, ſiſter, brother, wife!—Am I awake? Sure 'tis the fabric of a dream.

MEL. So mayeſt thou dream on through the remains of life; which, in its early part, thou haſt indeed found rough! But Heaven is good: and I am ſatisfied.

In youth's gay ſeaſon, be this truth believed;
One devious ſtep is often ne'er retrieved:

When

When once we quit fair order's tranquil ways;
Error to error leads, a dark embarraſs'd maze.
And, by the ſame eternal law decreed,
A ſure reward attends the virtuous deed:
Though here perhaps to ſhine unmark'd 'tis given;
Mounted on angel wings, 'tis regiſter'd in Heaven.

FINIS.

4 AP 54

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2